6: Tomasic E-4 (1947-1948) 1953 RF1 Great Russia RF1

standards of formal education, low level of agricultural technology, undeveloped means of transportation and too many idle days handicapped the advance of agriculture. In such circumstances the peasants did not even produce sufficient food to nourish themselves, much less a surplus to exchange for manufactured products. As a consequence the peasants were exposed to periodical famines during which many died of starvation.

Periodical epidemics of cholera, typhus, small pox, and other diseases took a toll as high as famines. A low degree of personal hygiene in crowded living conditions also increased the death rate. In addition there was a great dearth of doctors, nurses and hospitals, and no measures of preventive medicine. Equally ruinous were the periodical cattle epidemics due to primitive techniques of cattle raising. One should add to these misfortunes the figure of more than one hundred thousand peasant homes destroyed each summer by fires, many of them the result of arson. And if one considers the widely spread robbery, theft and murder that went undetected and unpunished, one gets an idea of the distressing personal and social conditions in which the Russian peasant lived. It was in such circumstances, left entirely to his own resources, that he developed an ideological, emotional and symbolical world of his own.

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THE ATTITUDES OF THE PEASANTRY

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STUNNED by the magnitude of the inimical and arbitrary social and physical forces which surrounded him and completely controlled his life, the Great-Russian peasant felt impotent and helpless. In the family circle if he had to be submissive and he was exposed to arbitrariness of the elder, he also might have enjoyed a certain degree of protection and succor.

* [i.e. in second half of XIXth century.--Analyst]